

POPULATION TRENDS IN PALESTINE

By D. V. GLASS

THE question of the relative rates of growth of the two major communities in Palestine—Moslems and Jews—has long been of special interest to demographers. Here in a small country, with a total population of about 1.76 millions, in which thirty years ago the oriental Jews probably had a culture pattern not dissimilar to that of the Moslems, a wave of migration of European Jews has, at least potentially, brought with it important elements of Westernization. According to the Anglo-American Committee of Enquiry, three-quarters of the growth of the Jewish population, from 84,000 in 1922 to 554,000 at the end of 1944, is due to immigration. For the Moslems only about 19,000 out of a total increase from 589,000 to 1.061 millions during the same period is accounted for by that factor.* With so large and rapid an influx of new cultural elements, it is clearly of great interest to know the course of fertility and mortality of the two communities and to see how far the communities influence each other demographically. Upon being able to gauge their interaction depends our ability to estimate, in realistic terms, the future total population of the country and its distribution as between the different communities.

Development of Census and Vital Statistics

There have been few modern studies of population trends in Palestine, and this is at least partly due to the unsatisfactory nature, until quite recent times, of the basic statistics. The first modern census was taken in 1922 and was not wholly satisfactory. The 1931 census was a great improvement and, even though there were evident errors in the

statements of ages, especially for Moslems, the results of that census form the starting point for relatively accurate demographic analysis. But the plan of following the 1931 census with quinquennial censuses did not materialize, being prevented by political disturbances in 1936 and by war in 1941. Thus for fifteen years the annual estimates of the population have been compiled primarily by extending the 1931 figures on the basis of recorded births, deaths and migration, with some allowance for illegal migration from 1939 onwards. Using this method, with no allowance for illegal migration, between 1922 and 1931 showed a discrepancy for the Jewish population of only about 2,000, as compared with a total of about 175,000 Jews enumerated in 1931.* This is surprisingly small, especially in view of the deficiencies of the 1922 census and of vital statistics before 1931, and the apparently small error may perhaps give support to the contention of the Jewish Agency that the Jewish population was understated by the 1931 census.† In any case, illegal migration is likely to have been of greater importance since 1931 and there is a longer period during which errors may have cumulated. In recent years there have also been independent estimates issued by the Food Controller, but it is likely that, for obvious reasons, these are inflated.‡ Annual estimates of the settled Moslem population are also liable to error. Vital statistics for them may still be incomplete—though it is possible that, in view of rationing, recent birth registration is rather more than com-

* *Palestine Blue Book*, 1936, p. 121.

† *Survey*, p. 163. Estimates of the Jewish Agency are always higher than those of the Government Statistician. The estimate for the end of 1944 amounted to 565,000, as compared with the original official estimate of 529,000.

‡ The Food Controller's estimate for the end of 1944 was 568,000, excluding enlisted soldiers (who are included in the other estimates). The Government Statistician has now issued a revised *de facto* estimate of 554,000 for the end of 1944. (*Survey*, p. 163.)

* *Report of the Anglo-American Committee of Enquiry*, (Cmd. 6808), London, 1946, p. 20. The figures derive from the population section of the Government of Palestine's *A Survey of Palestine*, Palestine, 1946, vol. 1, ch. 6. I am indebted to Major P. J. Loftus, Acting Government Statistician, for allowing me to make use of this material, as well as of other unpublished material to which later reference will be made.

plete—and there is uncontrolled and unrecorded migration across the land frontiers. It is usually believed that clandestine migration is much less important for Moslems than for Jews and there are good *a priori* and other reasons for this belief. Nevertheless, it is possible that illegal Arab migration has increased since the war. As regards the smaller groups in the country the post-censal estimates are probably still less reliable, while for the nomads it is customary simply to keep to the 1931 figure of 67,000.

Compulsory vital registration in Palestine dates from an Ordinance of 1922, but it is doubtful if either births or deaths were recorded with reasonable completeness before 1928, while marriage statistics are still rather unsatisfactory. For the nomads, vital registration is ineffective, so that demographic analysis must, in any case, be confined to the settled population. In addition, the difficulties of obtaining correct age statements in vital registration, especially for the Moslems, are similar to those found in the census.* The resultant errors undoubtedly reduce the validity of age-specific fertility rates and it is possible that the peculiarly high fertility rates found for certain age-groups of Moslem women in very recent years are in reality due to a combination of errors in age statements in census and vital records. Vital registration is improving both in completeness and in the range of data covered, and birth statistics, for example, are now available by religious group, age of parents, order of birth and duration of marriage. In combination with the next census, which is due to be taken in the autumn of 1946, it should be possible to undertake detailed studies of variations in fertility between groups and over time, especially as the census schedule itself will contain questions on the total number of children ever born and the duration of the present marriage. It may be that 1946 is an

unfortunate choice for a country in which, to ensure the success of the census, the co-operation of the various communities is peculiarly necessary and may not be very easy to gain. But demographers must pin their hopes on the census. Until the results of the census are available, all calculations based on post-censal population estimates must be regarded as provisional and liable to an increasing margin of error as they come nearer to the present time.

But in spite of the provisional nature of some of the calculations, it is still of interest to draw attention to them, especially as the Anglo-American Committee's references to population are so compressed as scarcely to do justice to the subject. The rest of this note will therefore consider some of the recent work on the prospective growth of the Moslem and Jewish populations.

Early Studies of Population Trends

Earlier official reports on Palestine were somewhat crude in their approach to the question of population trends. The Shaw Report assumed various crude rates of natural increase for the population as a whole, and various annual amounts of Jewish immigration.* The Peel Report assumed that the Arab population would grow in accordance with a logistic curve, rising from 0.943 millions in 1936 to 1.821 millions in 1970, and that the Jewish population would maintain an annual crude rate of natural increase of 21.01 per thousand, superimposed upon which were various hypotheses regarding the annual intake of migrants. Thus with no immigration the Jewish population would grow from 0.370 millions to 0.757 millions between 1936 and 1970, while with 60,000 immigrants a year the Jewish population by 1970 would amount to 3.735 millions.† But these methods of estimation do not take into account in any adequate way the combined influences of fertility and mortality and, especially if

* On the difficulties of obtaining correct statements of ages, see *Special Bulletin No. 21*, Department of Statistics (Government of Palestine), 1945, which gives some of the results of the 1944 survey of social and economic conditions in five Arab villages. The problems involved in obtaining the ages of Moslems are discussed in pp. 23-9 of the *Bulletin*.

* *Report of the Commission on the Palestine Disturbances of August, 1929* (Cmd. 3530), London, 1930. P. 110.

† *Palestine Royal Commission Report* (Cmd. 5479), London, 1937, pp. 280-2.

applied in long-term estimates, may give quite unrealistic results.

An attempt to investigate fertility differences between the major communities in Palestine was made, on lines similar to those of a fertility census, between October 1931 and February 1932. The Office of Statistics issued, through "officers of the public service, to members of the medical profession, and to persons interested in social matters," personal schedules containing questions on religion, ages of husband and wife, duration of marriage, numbers of children ever born alive, of still-born children and of surviving children. The enquiry appears to have been voluntary and the response was very poor. About 40,000 schedules were issued and "intelligible returns" were made for only 4551 families, comprising 2,724 Moslem, 695 Christian and 1,132 Jewish.* There is no account of the method of selecting the sample and no analysis of the bias of the small percentage of respondents, so that it is difficult to evaluate the results of the survey. However, the results showed, among other things, that in families of parents who had been living together for thirty-three or more years, the average number of children ever born alive per hundred families was 844 for Moslems, 787 for Christians, 630 for Oriental Jews and 673 for Western Jews. For Moslems, not very different results were shown by the social and economic survey of five Arab villages carried out in 1944 by the Department of Statistics. The latter survey was undertaken as much to see what procedures could be used in investigating Arab life and what difficulties would arise, as actually to collect new data. But the villages were selected with a view to their representativeness of the typical cereal-growing Arab village and, bearing in mind the smallness of the numbers involved, the material is of some interest. The data on fertility showed that for women married once only and aged 43

years and over at the time of the survey, the average total number of live-born children per woman was practically 8.0. Among this group of women (93 in all) there was no childlessness, and in fact among all women married once only and aged 23 years or more at the time of the survey there were only 10 cases of childlessness in a total of 385 women. It is scarcely necessary to emphasize that these figures indicate a high fertility.*

So far as the overall official statistics of Palestine are concerned, the first analysis of the reproductive trends of the two major communities was undertaken by Dr. Hinden.† Using substitute methods, as the distribution of births by maternal age was not available for the years concerned, she calculated approximate gross and net reproduction rates for Moslems and Jews in 1931. She found gross rates of 3.33 for Moslems and 1.61 for Jews, while the net rates were about 1.88 and 1.36 respectively.‡ Her discussion of future population growth in Palestine was based exclusively on the implications of these results, assuming that the stable rates of growth indicated would apply immediately, without the distorting effect of a transition period. This assumption was made because of the lack of any published post-censal estimates of the population by age and sex and, in fact, concentration upon the 1931 position was almost inevitable for that reason. It is very difficult for a private research worker to construct reliable post-

* *Special Bulletin No. 21*, p. 20. It is perhaps a little surprising that the fertility indicated was not still higher. For example, there were no cases of women who had had more than fourteen live-born children. Apart from the question of faulty memory, it is possible that children dying at or shortly after birth were recorded as still births, the rate for which seems to have been very high. Mills found (*Special Bulletin No. 3*, p. 15) for his couples with marriage duration of thirty-three or more years, that, in addition to the 844 live-born children per 100 Moslem families, still births amounted to about a further 10 per cent.

† R. Hinden, "The fertility and mortality of the population of Palestine," *Sociological Review*, January-April 1940.

‡ Recalculating the rates for Moslems on the basis of the age-specific fertility rates of 1941-2, to which reference will be made later, gives slightly lower figures, but the differences are not important. But the rates for Jews, as will be seen later, are significantly different from the results obtained by the Department of Statistics.

* In distributing the schedules "there was a request that a good proportion of the slips might be completed in respect of families in which the wife was aged 45 years or more and therefore was reaching the end of her reproductive period." See *Special Bulletin No. 3*, "The Fertility of Marriage in Palestine," Office of Statistics, Jerusalem, June 1939, p. 2.

censal estimates by age and sex for a country in which migration is an important element in population growth, and especially when there is unrecorded clandestine immigration. Yet in speculating upon future growth in Palestine it is clearly most important to take into account the developments in fertility and mortality since 1931.

Recent Work on Population Growth

In the absence of appropriate post-censal population estimates Notestein and Jurkat, in their study of Palestine, made use of crude birth and death rates and infant mortality rates, through drawing attention to the unsatisfactory nature of the two former rates.* These two authors argued that there has been a similar decline in mortality for both Jews and Moslems, though regional figures suggest that "in the areas with substantial Jewish minorities, mortality was declining more rapidly among non-Jews than among Jews." So far as infant and child mortality is concerned, this is supported by a recent study by Bachi and Kallner,† and it is particularly important in considering how far Western influences may reduce Moslem mortality in the future. For example, the Department of Statistics life table for Moslem women in 1930-2 shows an expectation of life at age 10 of about 54 years, less than five years below that of England and Wales for the same date.‡ Even allowing for some exaggeration in the Moslem life table, it nevertheless shows the potential effect of reductions in infant and child mortality among Moslems, for the relevant expectation of life at birth was only about 42 years, as compared with almost 63 years for England and Wales.

On fertility, Notestein and Jurkat inferred from the course of the crude birth rates that there had been a decline among both Jews and Moslems, though greater among the former. Their views was: "Part of the decline [among Moslems] may actually have

been due to changing age distributions, as the short cohorts born during the First World War were coming into the childbearing period. However, it seems unlikely that this explains the entire drop, and virtually certain that fertility actually declined. It is fair to conclude that even in the short span of modernization, the Moslem birth rate was beginning to respond downward." This conclusion has, of course, an important bearing upon the relative future contributions of the two main communities to the population of Palestine. But other evidence suggests that the fall in Moslem fertility is illusory and that, instead, the course of fertility since 1931 has swung even more in favour of Moslem reproduction than Notestein and Jurkat believed to be the case.

TABLE I
CRUDE RATES PER 1000*

	Birth Rate		Death Rate		Infant Mortality	
	Moslems	Jews	Moslems	Jews	Moslems	Jews
1931	53.65	32.20	26.21	9.59	186.50	81.59
1932	48.99	29.06	26.32	9.61	164.44	85.76
1933	49.87	29.02	24.09	9.20	156.80	80.48
1934	46.58	30.03	26.70	9.47	175.34	77.96
1935	52.59	30.64	23.48	8.53	148.10	64.15
1936	53.13	29.67	19.98	8.82	136.17	68.85
1937	49.82	26.47	24.86	7.72	179.31	57.20
1938	47.25	26.26	18.71	8.11	127.61	58.51
1939	46.42	23.02	17.38	7.57	121.50	54.00
1940	47.42	23.72	24.74	8.18	147.14	59.07
1941	49.22	20.67	21.40	7.89	131.72	55.59

The point is that the crude birth and death rates shown in Table I have become increasingly warped by changes in the age structure of the respective populations. In the case of the Moslems, for whom population growth has been almost entirely by natural increase—even supposing there has been an increase in illegal immigration—the reductions in infant and child mortality will have swollen the proportion of young children in the population. At the same time, as Notestein and Jurkat pointed out, the girls aged 10-19 years in 1931 would, as they passed into the adult age-groups, lessen the numbers of potential mothers. By 1941, therefore, the Moslem population, which even in 1931 was less favourable, in its age composition, to fertility than the Jewish population, would

* F. W. Notestein and E. Jurkat, "Population problems of Palestine," *Milbank Memorial Fund Quarterly*, October 1945.

† R. Bachi and G. Kallner, "The decline of child mortality in Palestine," *Acta Medica Orientalia*, January 1945.

‡ Cf. *Survey of Palestine*, Vol. 2, pp. 707-9.

* *Statistical Abstract of Palestine*, 1942, pp. 13-14.

be still less so. For the Jewish population, on the other hand, the continuous flow of immigrants in the adult ages would maintain the relatively favourable age structure—that is, favourable from the point of view of fertility. This is shown in Table II, which summarizes some of the relevant statistics. Taking into account the large volume of immigration—there were about 220,000 registered Jewish immigrants between 1931 and 1940—the figures suggest that by 1941 the population was not significantly less favourable in its age structure than in 1931.

TABLE II

AGE DISTRIBUTION OF MOSLEM AND JEWISH POPULATIONS IN 1931, AND OF JEWISH IMMIGRANTS 1931-42 (PERCENTAGE DISTRIBUTION)

Age	Moslem* Popn. 1931	Jewish* Popn. 1931	Jewish Immigrants in			
			1935†	1936†	1937-42†	1933-44† Male Female
0-14	41	33	20	17	17	19 19
15-49	47	55	65	65	66	68 67
50 & over	12	12	15	18	17	13 14
	100	100	100	100	100	100 100

The level of Moslem fertility in 1941-2 may be calculated by making use of an estimate of the age-distribution of the Moslem population of Palestine as at the end of 1941, prepared by the Central Bureau of Medical Statistics of the Haddasah Medical Organization. Though, in view of the difficulties mentioned earlier, the estimate cannot be regarded as more than approximate, there is no reason to doubt its general validity.§ Based on that estimate and the births and deaths from the relevant issues of the *Annual Bulletin of Vital Statistics*, the gross reproduction rate for Moslems in 1941-2 was 3.91 and the net rate 2.48, as compared with Dr. Hinden's rates for 1931 of 3.33 and 1.88 respectively. Even assuming that the post-censal estimates of the Moslem population are somewhat understated, there is no reason to believe that the overall fertility of Moslem

women has declined and it is probable that there has been some increase since 1931, though perhaps not as much as indicated by the rise in the gross reproduction rate. As regards the net reproduction rate, there seems no reason to doubt that it had risen substantially and that by 1941-2 it was one of the highest found at any time or in any place. It implies a rate of growth of almost 150 per cent in each generation, and Table III indicates how the Moslem population would increase if the fertility and mortality of 1941-2 were maintained.

TABLE III

ESTIMATED SETTLED MOSLEM POPULATION, ASSUMING THE CONTINUANCE OF THE FERTILITY AND MORTALITY OF 1941-2*

(thousands)	
Year (31 December)	Population (thousands)
1941	917
1951	1,211
1961	1,636
1971	2,204

The above figures do not, of course, constitute a reasoned forecast, but simply an estimate based on specific assumptions and are designed to show what would follow from the continuance of the stated levels of fertility and mortality. What they do suggest is that in the absence of any decline in Moslem fertility and of Jewish immigration, the proportion of Jews to the total population of Palestine would fall quite considerably by 1971.

Current Official Studies of Reproductive Trends

Rather more elaborate calculations have been prepared by the Palestine Department of Statistics, based on more comprehensive material than is available in published form at present, and the subsequent Tables summarize the main results.†

* The estimate was computed by quinquennial age-groups and for every fifth calendar year beginning with 1941. Life Tables were constructed for 1941-2 and show an expectation of life at birth of 48.2 years for Moslem females and 47.4 years for Moslem males. In view of the unsatisfactory nature of the basic data, these life tables cannot be regarded as more than reasonable approximations, though they agree fairly well with the tables of the Department of Statistics.

† Unless otherwise stated, the Tables are extracted, with the permission of Major Loftus, from the unpublished report referred to above.

* *Census of Palestine, 1931*, vol. 1, part 1, Report.

† *Annual Report of the Department of Immigration, 1938*, and subsequent years.

‡ *Considerations on the Future Development of the Population of Palestine, 1946*, Table A.10 (Unpublished report of the Palestine Department of Statistics).

§ The estimate, which appears to have been prepared with the help of the Department of Statistics, makes some allowance for Moslem immigration. See *Special Bulletin No. 21*, p. 30.

TABLE IV

GROSS AND NET REPRODUCTION RATES OF PALESTINE
MOSLEMS AND JEWS, 1931-42

	Moslems		Jews	
	G.R.R.	N.R.R.	G.R.R.	N.R.R.
1931	3.26	1.80	1.50	1.18
1933	3.18	1.85	1.28	1.08
1935	3.57	2.11	1.32	1.13
1937	3.69	2.11	1.14	1.02
1939	3.59	2.46	1.09	0.98
1941	3.93	2.41	1.06	0.94
1942	3.66	2.39	1.20	1.07

Table IV shows that, while Moslem fertility appears to have risen since 1931, Jewish fertility has certainly fallen, and the concurrent fall in mortality among Jews has not been sufficient to keep the net reproduction rate constant. The ratio between the net reproduction rates of Moslems and Jews was substantially higher in 1942 than in 1931. In 1943 and 1944 there appear to have been very substantial rises in fertility among both communities, but even though the rates for those years are somewhat dubious, because of the unreliability of the estimates of the size and age-structure of the populations, they do not suggest any significant change in the trend of the ratios between Moslem and Jewish replacement.

With the above material—though in considerably more detail—as background, the Department of Statistics has prepared a series of estimates of the future population of Palestine. But because of the uncertainty of the most recent statistics and, in any case, of the short period during which the census and vital statistics of the country have been reasonably complete and accurate, the Department was unwilling to suggest any specific trends in fertility or mortality as being most likely to obtain. Instead, estimates were prepared on various assumptions in order to indicate a range of possibilities. Table V summarizes the main points of the estimates of the Moslem and Jewish populations. In order not to cloud the issue still further, immigration has been excluded from the hypotheses, and the results derive exclusively from the assumed fertility and mortality rates.

TABLE V

ESTIMATES OF THE FUTURE POPULATION OF PALESTINE
MOSLEMS AND JEWS (in thousands)

		Resultant Populations at beginning of year			
		1945		1960	
Estimates	Hypotheses	Moslems	Jews	Moslems	Jews
	Fertility Mortality				
A	Moslems	1,061	554	1,533	664
	As in 1939-44				
	1926-42				
	Jews as in 1926-44				
B	Moslems	1,061	554	1,591	685
	As in 1938-42				
	Jews as in 1943-5				
C	Moslems	1,061	554	1,476	642
	As in 1939-44				
	1932-4				
	Jews as in 1939-44				

It is perhaps a little unfortunate that the hypotheses for the Jews should, in part, have made use of the uncertain statistics for 1943 and 1944, for the significance of the apparent increases in fertility in those years is by no means clear. But the inclusion of these years provides an indication of what would happen with the maintenance of a very high rate of fertility among the Jews.* On any of the above assumptions, however, it is clear that the ratio of Moslems to Jews would increase quite considerably by 1960—from about 1.9 to about 2.3. Yet it would not require much immigration to redress the balance. Assuming that immigrants had the same fertility and mortality as is postulated for the Jews in Estimate A, 100,000 immigrants entering at the beginning of 1947 would, by the beginning of 1960, yield a total population of about 134,000. This addition to the basic population in 1960, according to estimate A, would be almost enough to maintain the ratio of Moslems to Jews obtaining in 1945.†

* The years 1943-4 have been excluded from the fertility assumptions for the Moslems, as the Department of Statistics believes that the extremely high fertility rates at ages 20-24 and 25-29 years in that period are in large part due to an underestimation of the numbers of women in those groups.

† On the other hand, an immigration of 100,000 per year for seven years, beginning with 1947, would, on the same terms, be sufficient to bring up the Jewish population to the size of the Moslem population by 1960.

The Future Course of Fertility and Mortality

Although the above calculations are of considerable interest, they do not answer the main question, which is: how are the fertility and mortality of the two main communities in Palestine likely to develop? At present there is no clear answer to this question, but consideration of the main factors may help to suggest some leads. First, as regards mortality, Table VI summarizes some data, produced by the Department of Statistics, on changes in the expectation of life at birth among Moslems and Jews since 1931. The Table shows that, although the Moslems have gained markedly in the period, they still have a considerable margin to make up in order to reach the present levels of Western countries. There is no reason why they should not do so and, with

TABLE VI
EXPECTATION OF LIFE AT BIRTH (IN YEARS)

	Moslems		Jews	
	Males	Females	Males	Females
1930-2	41.51	42.34	59.90	62.66
1936-8	46.70	48.53	60.79	64.47
1939-41	46.12	46.85	62.34	64.55

greater expenditure on education and public health, and with a rise in the standard of living which ought to be brought about by further industrialization, Western levels might be reached in a relatively short time.* The Jews, on the other hand, have already reached high levels—for males considerably and for females slightly above the position in England and Wales in 1937. Though further improvement is certainly still practicable, it will probably be more difficult to achieve than for the Moslems.

So far as Moslem fertility is concerned, there is little to suggest that Western influences have as yet been of importance. Mills said that, although the results of his inquiry showed no statistical evidence of the practice of contraception, it had been practised in recent years by urban Moslems.† The Department of Statistics argues that such

practice is indicated by the lower fertility of Moslems in large towns, and among Moslems in the liberal professions and middle classes.* It would certainly be of great interest to see the statistics from which these inferences have been drawn. Lower fertility among urban Moslems might, for example, be due to reductions in the amount of, or to an increase in the age at, marriage, as well as to restrictions on marital fertility, and such a development would be in line with what seems to have taken place in Japan. The amount of marriage is also a question of some importance. In discussing this, the Department of Statistics concluded that the nuptiality rate seemed to be at its maximum and that no further increase could "reasonably be expected." Yet the marriage and birth statistics for 1940-3 suggest that the increase in births was greatest among first and second births (second births particularly between 1942-3), and for mothers aged under 30 years, and that this might have been due in part to an increase in marriage. These data need much closer examination and, in particular, to be checked against the results of the coming census. But whether or not family planning is beginning to take hold of the Moslems, it is clear that during the past fifteen years European mortality has been grafted on Oriental fertility. There may very well be further substantial falls in mortality before fertility declines in any significant way.

Fertility among the Jewish population fell fairly consistently between 1931 and 1941, though it seems to have risen very markedly since then. The fall is no doubt partly due to swamping, by the immigrants, of the more fertile Oriental Jews. It would be of importance, however, to see whether and, if so, how far there has been a decline among the Oriental Jews, as well as among the immigrants themselves. There is no reason to doubt that birth control is practised by the immigrants. Indeed, in the collective settlements—which comprise a small part of the population—the decision by a couple to have a child or further children is one which is

* This would be very likely to happen if, in fact, Recommendation No. 5 of the Anglo-American Committee were implemented—namely, to raise the Arab standard of living to that of the Jews.

† *Special Bulletin No. 3*, p. 11.

* *Considerations*, p. 8.

discussed with the community and in terms of whether the community can afford to have additional children at that time.* This kind of attitude would provide an element of resilience, helping to raise fertility with improved economic conditions or prospects. It may in part account for the abandoning of previous postponement of births within marriage which is suggested by the run of the birth statistics between 1942 and 1943.† Propaganda for larger families—as part of the general desire for expansion and self-protection—may also be having some effect. But in the absence of any more fundamental change than has so far occurred, it would seem probable on balance that the fertility of Jewish immigrants would follow the general course of fertility of the countries from which they derive, though on a higher level.

* H. F. Infield, *Co-operative Living in Palestine*, London, 1946, p. 73-5.

† Among Jewish women the largest proportional increase in births between 1942 and 1943 was for second births and especially for women aged between 30 and 45 years of age. It has been suggested that the increase in births to these women may be partly explained by the shortage of contraceptives, which became very marked after 1942.

The conclusion, which is by no means novel, is that the fertility of the Moslems is unlikely to fall rapidly in the near future but that the fertility of the Jews is likely to follow the course observed between 1931 and 1941. Even this conclusion is, however, very tentative, for there is not a sufficient run of reliable and comprehensive statistics to serve as a basis for analysis. It is imperative that the demographic statistics of Palestine be improved and expanded so that changes in the inherent rates of growth of the various communities can be seen if and when they occur. This is not just a matter of academic interest but of direct relevance to the economy of the country. The demographic factor is one of the most important factors in any consideration of the future of Palestine. Every effort should be made to ensure that the basic census and vital statistics are appropriate to the importance of the population question.*

* I very much hope that, when the post-censal population estimates have been checked against the preliminary results of the impending census, it will be possible to publish the detailed report of the Department of Statistics, *Considerations on the Future Development of the Population of Palestine*, which has been the basis of a large part of this note.